

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A biodegradable molded article comprising:
a biodegradable expanded molded article molded in a specified shape with and having an irregular surface by steam expansion molding; and
a thermally softened coating film attached to the irregular surface of the biodegradable expanded molded article during the expansion molding so as to maintain the irregular surface of the biodegradable expanded molded article, the film being mainly made of a biodegradable plastic and having at least hydrophobicity,
the biodegradable expanded molded article being molded, ~~through steam expansion~~, from a slurry or dough molding material mainly made of a starch or a derivative thereof and prepared by adding water to the starch or the derivative thereof,
the starch or the derivative thereof containing high-amylose starch or a derivative thereof.
2. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the starch or the derivative thereof contains not less than 50 weight % high-amylose starch or a derivative thereof.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A biodegradable molded article comprising:
a biodegradable expanded molded article molded in a specified shape with and having an irregular surface by steam expansion molding; and

a thermally softened coating film attached to the irregular surface of the biodegradable expanded molded article during the expansion molding so as to maintain the irregular surface of the biodegradable expanded molded article, the film being mainly made of a biodegradable plastic and having at least hydrophobicity,

said biodegradable expanded molded article being molded, ~~through steam expansion~~, from a slurry or dough molding material mainly made of a starch or a derivative thereof and prepared by adding water and polyvinyl alcohol to the starch or the derivative thereof.

4. (ORIGINAL) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol has a polymerization degree of not less than 1500.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol has a saponification degree of not less than 75%.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the coating film is mainly made of a modified polyester.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the coating film is biaxially stretched.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the molding material further contains a water-insoluble fiber.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the expanded molded article accounts for not less than 60 weight % of total weight of the biodegradable molded article.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the molding material contains water which accounts for 20 weight % to 70 weight %, assuming that the biodegradable molded article is 100 weight %.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the coating film is directly and substantially adhered to the surface.

12. (ORIGINAL) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the biodegradable expanded molded article has a final water content between 3 weight % and 20 weight %.

13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 4, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol has a saponification degree of not less than 75%.

14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the coating film is mainly made of a modified polyester.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the coating film is biaxially stretched.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the molding material further contains a water-insoluble fiber.

17. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the expanded molded article accounts for not less than 60 weight % of total weight of the biodegradable molded article.

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the molding material contains water which accounts for 20 weight % to 70 weight %, assuming that the biodegradable molded article is 100 weight %.

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the coating film is directly and substantially adhered to the surface.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the biodegradable expanded molded article has a final water content between 3 weight % and 20 weight %.

21. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 1, wherein the irregular surface includes bumps and dips.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The biodegradable molded article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the irregular surface includes bumps and dips.